FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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Our cover is a detail from the Peaceable Kingdom by Edward Hicks.

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"For a world united in prayer"

Words of Wisdom

This we know. The earth does not belong to humanity – humanity belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons and daughters of the earth. We did not weave the web of life, we are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

Chief Seattle

And in this he showed me something small, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed to me, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought: What can this be? I was amazed that it could last, for I thought that because of its littleness it would suddenly have fallen into nothing. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has being through the love of God.

Julian of Norwich

Men substitute tradition for the living experience of the love of God. They talk and think as though walking with God was attained by walking in the footsteps of men who walked with God.

Francis Howgill

We can say to people, the Bible is our sacred book; therefore, what you read in it you must believe. But what a far greater appeal there is if we say: in this book are to be found truths that we believe are universal and eternal. We have verified them in our own lives and we invite you to test them for yourselves.

John Hobart

Editorial: The Gift

Experiencing life's sacredness in ourselves and in the world around us is one of the primary gifts of the spirit. It is the root and ally of our freedom, the working basis of our ability to choose between activities that matter and those that do not.

Inhabiting a dead world, a world of things, is one of the curses that haunt us. Our culture, with its emphasis on the analytic, has taken us so far that for many of us, the Divine itself has been reduced to one concept- one thing- among the many that crowd our lives.

How can we live when we have forgotten God – the source and sustainer of our lives? Can we continue to try and take God's place in our own lives and in the natural world?

The consequences of this course are all around us. The havoc we wreak in our pride, our complacency, and our fear is apparent in our homes, our towns, in our faces, and in the faces of those around us.

Fear rises in our hearts when we look on the world that we have made for ourselves and for our children. What can we do?

We can stop. Just stop. Stop whenever we can, whenever we chance to remember that we need not go on indefinitely, infinitely repeating the patterns of our past.

We can learn to stop, and open our minds, and hearts, and senses even if it is only for a moment.

The creation and the presence of the Creator are all around us. They are real, and it is toward their reality that we must turn ourselves and our attentions if we truly wish to free ourselves from the many deaths we fear.

Our lives and the lives of the world depend upon the love of our Creator. The reality of these words meets us everywhere and can transform our lives if we respond with love and gratitude, and are willing to be nourished.

The proud fictions by which we customarily live are, we know, beyond our ultimate power to maintain. We need not try. A loving and compassionate reality awaits us, and full lives in service to a living wisdom so much greater than our own.

– E.M.

Readers are encouraged to send us the names and addresses of those who would like to receive future issues of Fellowship in Prayer. This bi-monthly publication is available at no charge to anyone who requests it. Please write or telephone our office during business hours: Fellowship in Prayer, 134 Franklin Corner Road, Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648. Telephone (609) 896-3636. We will be happy to hear from you.

From our Readers

In need, I sought out the June issue of *Fellowship in Prayer* this morning. First the Editorial, then the note about future issues, then Words of Wisdom, Letting it Happen and the Wealthy Life and the World Peace essay and prayer were there unfolding to touch my needs with insight and compassion. Thank you!!

Marion Richards, Delhi, New York

When I went to India in October, I took with me a few copies of *Fellowship in Prayer,* and they were in great demand among the disciples of Meher Baba and the many pilgrims from all over the world.

William Stephens, Brentwood, Tennessee

I have found the booklet to be useful so very many times – for centering myself, for enlarging my perspective, and for sharing with others. I particularly appreciate the broad view of Truth. When it seems that everyone around is narrowing the Path of Truth, you keep the Ways open for the many manifestations of Spirit.

Carleen Webb, Eugene, Oregon

I certainly have enjoyed all of the contents of the excellent issues you sent. The issue on "TAO" provides an excellent translation and commentary. The introductory essays are very stimulating and offer a perspective on TAO in terms of contemporary humanity and its needs which is creative and refreshing.

The Rev. Glenroy B. Wolfsen, Keyport, N.J.

I liked your article on centers. My spiritual journey was given a huge push a few years ago by a visit to St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Mass. . . . There is a revitalization of spiritual seeking going on. I've found monasteries to be oases of peace in this frantic, agitated society; and for contemplatives forced by circumstances to be active, like myself, they're a necessary refreshment.

Willie Yaryan, Boulder Creek, California

I greet you all with the joy that God is always our Refuge and a very present Help in trouble. It is also my deep conviction that since I have been reading your magazine, Fellowship in Prayer, I have been part and parcel of that Fellowship and been sustained in my faith in God, whatever may happen. . . .

Our place, Maydolong, has been the center of the most ferocious typhoon that ever occurred, according to a 94-year-old typhoon veteran. Typhoon Undang took place last November 4th, 1984, and released her fury at 245 miles per hour with strong winds and heavy rains. Rivers flooded and the ocean roared and rolled its huge waves . . . . Houses were washed away . . . and our church was completely destroyed, although it was semi-concrete. . . The whole place looks lamentable and forlorn. We see such terrible desolation. . . .

There was a one-day free clinic. . . People received five pieces of woven palm leaves for shelter and about seven kilograms of rice. . . .

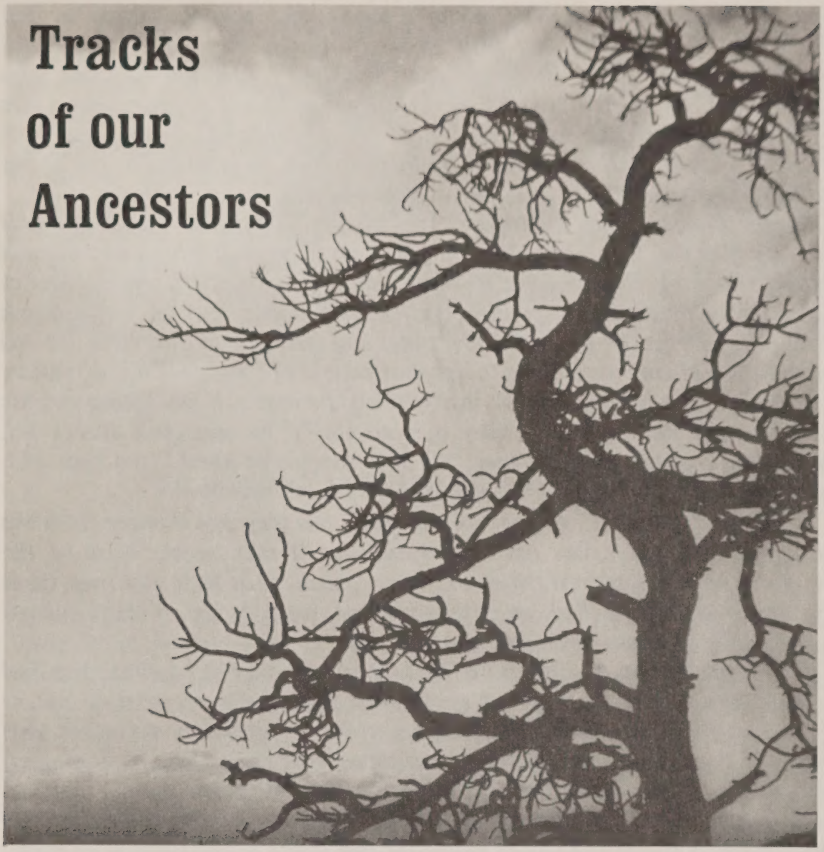
However severe the moral spiritual and political crisis in our country, we look up to Him and are made strong in God's love. We are almost ready to worship in our church, although it is temporary. Members worked voluntarily to restore it. . . In this we are made stronger in God; even in the midst of the ruins, we see the beauty of the warm fellowship with one another in Christ. . . .

I know that your institution, though unseen, gives us magnetic sustenance. . . .

Mrs. Alejandra A. Ambida
Maydolong 700
Eastern Samar,
Phillipines

I try to walk in the woods once or twice a day, because I find some of my best insights and intuitions come during the walks. Nature has a marvelous way of clarifying things. Recently, as I started out into the woods after a particularly dry and restless hour of adoration, I was bemoaning the fact that I seemed so restless during the hours I set aside to be alone with the Lord, and suddenly a voice said (in my head, not audibly!), 'it is you who are critical, not I', and with that a vista seemed to be opening which was endless. But the little shadow self we, or most of us, seem to carry around inside us, spoke up and said, 'yes, but you really are not very attentive' and instantly the vision of the vista went away, or closed up. Again, I know the Lord beckons, but I still want to run the show or make the decisions or judgements. So, there is still a long way to go.

Pat Murray,
Loretto, Pa.



THE SPIRITUALITY OF NATIVE PEOPLE

A talk by John Stokes

The traditional Native peoples hold the key to the reversal of the processes in Western Civilization which promise unimaginable future suffering and destruction. Spiritualism is the highest form of political consciousness. And we, the Native peoples of the Western Hemisphere, are among the world's surviving proprietors of that kind of consciousness. We are here to impart that message.

– A Basic Call to Consciousness, The Hau de no sau nee [Iroquois] Address to the Western World (delivered to the U.N. at Geneva, Switzerland, 1977)

When John Stokes was graduated from Princeton in 1974, most students had blown off political activism and were hunkered down in Firestone Library, preparing themselves for professional careers. Stokes took a different

route. He accepted a teaching job in a Greek prep school, hoping to find people like the ones he had read about in Zorba. *But he was soon disillusioned by the effete snobbism that prevailed under the Colonels who ruled Greece. He started hanging out in villages and came to appreciate a side of Greece few tourists encounter, much less understand: o laos, the "real people." After a year of such post-graduate studies, he returned to the States and did a two-year stint as an editor at Beacon Press.*

His involvement with Australia's "real people" happened – as Stokes tells it – "by mistake." He noticed an ad about an aboriginal school in Australia that was looking for someone to teach country-and-western music. Stokes didn't know much about country-and-western music, but he was a quick study on guitar, so he learned a few tunes and arranged an interview. He was greeted by a Maori, one of the indigenous people of New Zealand. A massive man, built like a refrigerator, he was wearing a sweat suit and lifting weights as Stokes entered the room. "Play us your stuff," he said. And Stokes did, singing and playing his heart out. "Go tell 'em you're hired," the man said, continuing with his workout. Thus ended the Maori interview.

Stokes spent the next six years in Australia, teaching and learning from the aborigines. His quest was not as romantic as it may seem. Most of the aborigines he met were not tribal; they were urban, or at least suburban types, who had been steamrolled by civilization and were trying to learn enough survival skills to live in the white man's world.

The longer he stayed, the more he realized how much the aborigines had to teach him – and us – about spirituality. Seeing Western society caught up by seemingly incurable ills such as nuclear proliferation, pollution, and economic injustice, Stokes became convinced that it was the technological West, and not the "backward" aboriginals, that had taken the wrong road.

"The religions of the East and of the West have many fine sayings," Stokes observed, "but it was among the native peoples that I found those sayings put into practice on a day-to-day level." The native peoples do not separate the sacred and profane, as so often happens in so-called "developed" or "developing" nations. All aspects of nature, and all human encounters with nature, are sanctified.

Among native peoples, Stokes learned, hunting and tracking are more than just a way of finding food: they are a way of seeing and experiencing reality – a spiritual as well as a life-sustaining practice. The indigenous hunter does not just stalk and kill game. Through fasting, self-discipline, prayer, and keen observations he becomes at-one with nature. It isn't easy. To be a master tracker requires the deductive powers of a Sherlock Holmes and the spiritual sensitivity of a St. Francis. Deciding that tracking made more sense than most advanced studies offered in Western universities, Stokes befriended a Pitjantjatara aborigine named Jimmy James. He learned as much as he could about survival skills and traditional wisdom; he even become moderately proficient at the didjeridu – an aborignal instrument made from a tree trunk hollowed out by termites. "After six years of studying the Book of Nature, as some Westerners call it," Stokes said, "I feel as if I'm just mastering the alphabet."

While in New Jersey, Stokes met Tom Brown, a master tracker who had grown up under the training of an Apache scout, wrote books like The Tracker *and founded the now well-known Survival School. It was here that Stokes found a "fellow warrior" and a calling. Stokes has taught at the Survival School for three years, showing students not only how to track, how to survive, how to practice the ancient skills of woodcraft, but also how to see the world in a new and life-affirming light. As Tom Brown expressed it in a recent issue of* East/West Journal: *"Living off the land, living from the bounty of nature, is living well, comfortably, in style. It is not debilitating. It is rich and rewarding. It is the most beautiful lifestyle there is. And it is the fastest way to get in touch with yourself, with nature, and with God."*

– A.M.

TRACKING AND ANCESTRAL VISIONS

I am glad to be speaking at the Third World Center – it was a new thing when I was at Princeton in 1970 and I'm glad that it's still around. But I don't know about these terms – First World, Second World, Third World . . . I suppose I am speaking about the Fourth World, the Natural People, but I'd rather not define them that way. I'm going to talk about indigenous people, those who are native to place, and they come in all shapes, sizes and colors – people from all over the world who are trying to remain themselves. We often mistake their struggle to remain themselves as something political when in fact it is also something spiritual. They are holding on to a way of life that has meaning to them. . . .

When I came to Australia, I didn't have much interest in aboriginal culture. But one evening I was in an Australian pub, and on the t.v. screen there was an aborigine, all painted up, with topknot of pigeon feathers tied to his head band. He was playing the didjeridu. It was the most remarkable thing I'd seen on a t.v. set, and no one paid any attention, except for a few folks who said "Dirty this" or "Lazy that." All of a sudden, it was crystal clear – the split in Australian society and in the whole world. And I've been fleshing out the details since.

I went to the aboriginal college and there was another gap I had to jump across. The white people were having a go at me for teaching at the aboriginal college. The aboriginal people had a go at me for even coming there. They thought I was an anthropologist, so they decided to introduce me to their tribal man. The man they introduced me to was named Nanajiji from the Malmadjeri tribe in western Australia, and I came to find out later he was a magic man. He showed me his "t.v. set": he pulled out a stone with some carvings on it, and said, "I see everything on this." People have false ideas about the shaman or magic man. It really means "clever man" – an important, healing man in his tribe. Peering at me with his one eye, he took me into his

back room and said, "You wanna see a sacred painting?" "Not really," I replied. "I want to show it to you anyway." He pulled out a painting from a desk where it was hidden, and said: "You want to know what this painting means? It means 'Tell all the white people to go away and leave the aboriginal people alone.' " So I went out the door. I realized later that he hadn't hurt me, and he had spoken his mind, and had a good laugh at my tail-feathers going out the door. This was the beginning of my education into a side of the world I knew nothing about – fully half of the world that I had been neglecting, not through any fault of my own, because the information wasn't out. . .

As I worked more with these people, they came to adopt me as a resident clown, and I went through the same initiation process you go through when you meet any culture . . . I came to learn that tribal people all over the world have two qualities which we could learn a lot from. One of those is patience, and the other is humor. It's their amazing patience that allows tribal people to sit back and look at things, to detach and be outside while still being in it. We have a lot of great sayings that come to us from Eastern and Western religions, but I'm not sure how often they're practiced. In the tribe you see these things practiced on a day-to-day level. . . .

I was hired by the only college in Australia managed entirely by aboriginal people. If they didn't like what I was saying, they don't stay in the room and argue. They get up and leave. Native people vote with their feet. . . It's very good instant feedback.

I learned a lot about learning from native people. They have a saying: "You must eat a deer one bite at a time." We Westerners are in such a hurry we want to eat the whole deer in one bite. If you go to an aboriginal man and start asking questions, he'll size you up before he answers. And he can tell by the way you walk, the way you hold you body, just where you're coming from. And sometimes he won't tell you anything, or he'll lie. Because there are some things that you are not supposed to know until you're ready.

As I started going in and out of the aboriginal world, I started meeting Native Americans and realized that aborigines feel an affiliation with other oppressed people, such as Blacks and Native Americans. If you go back more deeply into their histories, you'll find that both the Australians and Native Americans are a land-based people with many similarities. . . .

Spiritual Politics

The spiritual philosophy of the Indians has been written down in *A Basic Call to Consciousness.* One paper ends with the statement: "Spirituality is the highest form of political consciousness." In other words, if your politics do not include the natural world, they're really nowhere, because the natural world is going to have to die at the expense of your politics. I know that everybody here realizes that it is 1984, and the trees don't look quite right, and the insecticides are killing not just what they were supposed to kill. In the Adirondacks they killed so many of the blackflies that now the bumblebees are dying, and they are what help pollinate the trees. . . Why do we go on doing this, knowing what we know?

In this same paper, the Native Americans talk about their way of looking at the spirit:

"Ours is a Way of Life. We believe that all living things are spiritual beings. Spirits can be expressed as energy forms manifested in matter.

"All the things of the world are real, material things. The Creation is a true material phenomenon, and the Creation manifests itself to us as reality. The spiritual universe, then, is manifested to man as Creation, and the Creation supports life. We believe that man is real, a part of the Creation, and that his duty is to support Life in conjunction with other beings. That is why we call ourselves Ongwhehonwhe – Real People.

"The original instructions direct that we who walk about on the Earth are to express a great respect, an affection, and a gratitude towards all the spirits which create and support life. We give a greeting and thanksgiving to the many supporters of our own lives – the corn, beans, squash, the winds, the sun. When people cease to respect and express gratitude for these many things, all life will be destroyed, and human life on this planet will come to an end."

All native peoples see themselves as "Real People," linked to the natural world. That's why they have totems. It's not enough to sit in a room and assume that the natural world is gonna be okay. You actually take it upon yourself to be one with some aspect of the natural world. In this room of, say, thirty people, each of us would hold a part of the landscape, and along with other groups of thirty who make up our language group we would represent every animal species. The first thing you do when you get a totem is not eat your own totem animal. That's how you ensure the fertility of your species. Everything is done to make sure that species are fertile. Therefore, when you go out into nature to take something from it, that connection has never been broken. . .

We are simply too far from the ground. We have shoes on. We are elevated on floors. People don't like the ground. When they touch the ground, they brush off the dirt. Imagine that! In the central desert of Australia when you have a cut, you rub dirt on the wound to prevent it from infection. That's the old days. The earth is so polluted now that if you did that, you'd pollute your cut.

We make a mistake by not realizing that native people are people, and the same thing that prevents us from that realization keeps us from connecting with the natural world.

I use the principles of tracking to talk about this problem because the track is on the ground, it goes into the hunter's eyes, and it comes out in the hunt, on the cave wall, and in the sacred dances – a full circle. When you take a deer, you thank the deer for giving its life. You thank the Creator for giving you the deer. We have a spliced, edited, t.v. version of the deer hunt. We only see the Indian poised with the bow and the dramatic kill. What we don't see is that for one week beforehand the Indian may have eaten what the deer eats, to cover his scent. He may have gone into the sweat lodge to pray. Or he may have fasted for two days so he would be worthy in the Creator's eyes to take something from the flow of creation. . . .

The Rootless Trinity

All my life I've wondered how we got so far away from ourselves and from the natural world. Then a book came to me from a friend – *The Gospel of Peace of Jesus Christ* – which I am sure many here could discredit – but to me, it presents an image of how we might have lost our connectedness. According to this book, Jesus left the people two halves of the Lord's prayer, and we now only have the first half. The second half begins:

Our mother, which art upon earth,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come and thy will be done
in us as it is in thee.
As thou sendst every day thy angels,
send them to us also.
Forgive us our sins as we atone all our sins against thee.
Lead us not into sickness, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the earth, and the body, and the health. Amen.

If this is true, we lost the connection back there, because all native people see the earth as the mother. And as soon as you lose touch with the earth as the mother, she ceases to give you what you need to nurture your body.

Image that a crucifix which had four points got the bottom knocked off. When we say 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,' we ignore what holds this trinity up: the earth. We've lost that point of contact which all native peoples recognize, and so the triangle floats over the earth in search of a grounding. We need somehow to re-connect it . . .

I wondered for some time how that might happen. After I met Tom Brown, I realized that what we needed was true awareness and tracking skills. You didn't need to travel to New Mexico; you could practice simply by going our your back door, noticing the natural world, thanking it for being there, and doing your little part to make it better. . . .

Anyone who would like more information about tracking or the spiritual practices of native peoples is encouraged to consult one of the following sources:

Tom Brown's Survival School. P.O. Box 173, Asbury, NJ 08802. Also recommended are Tom Brown's autobiography, *The Tracker,* and his various wilderness guides, available through Berkley Books.

A Basic Call to Consciousness, available through *Akwesasne Notes* (Mohawk Nation, Rooseveltown, New York 13683). *Akwesasne Notes,* a weekly newspaper, is one of the best sources of information about the spiritual and political life of contemporary Native Americans.

Also recommended is *Black Elk Speaks,* as told to John G. Neihardt. This moving spiritual autobiography depicts a great shaman's vision of the meaning of life.

The ancient masters were
Inwardly subtle and darkly perceptive.
Their depth was beyond understanding.

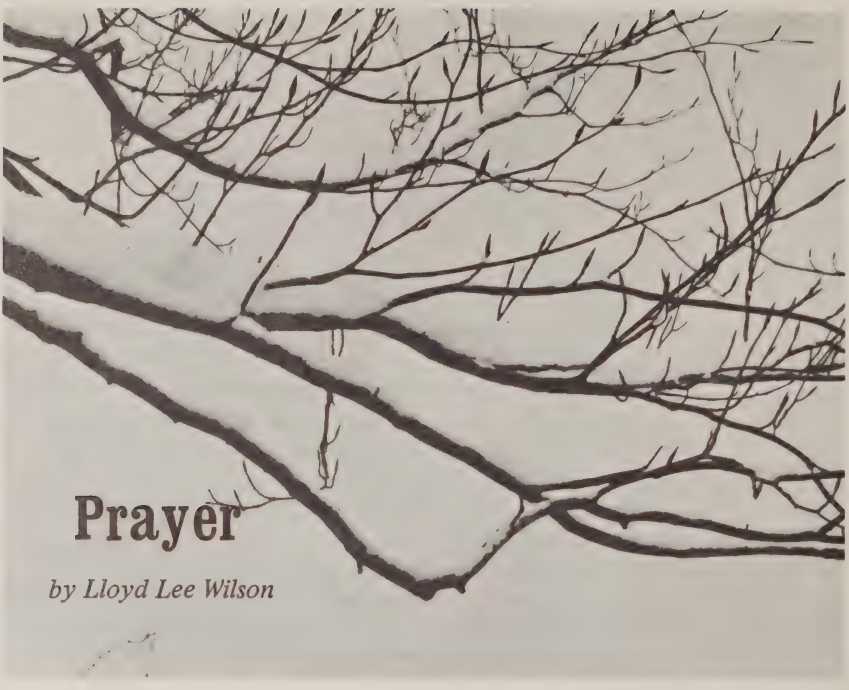
Because they were beyond understanding,
They can be described only by appearance:
Hesitant as if wading a river in winter,

Reluctant as if fearing a neighbor,
Reserved as if acting as guest,
Effacing like ice starting to melt,
Simple like uncarved wood,
Open like a valley,
Confused like muddy water.

Who else could clear muddy water
By quieting it?
Who else could move clear water
By bringing it to life?

Whoever keeps to Tao
Does not want to be full.
Not full, he can practice
Concealment instead of accomplishment.

Lao tzu



Prayer

by Lloyd Lee Wilson

Prayer is at the heart of religious life. Standing naked before the Living God, we become changed persons. The best of our spiritual companions evidence a quality of life described centuries ago by Isaac Penington, the English Quaker:

> There is a continual praying unto God. There is a continual blessing and praising of his name, in eating, or drinking, or whatever else is done. There is a continual bowing to the majesty of the Lord in every thought, in every word, in every action, though it be in worldly things and occasions; yet the spirit of the Lord is seen there, and the tongue confesseth him there, and the knee boweth to him there.

While prayer is an essential ingredient in our religious life, it is not automatic or instinctual. We are forced as individuals to learn for ourselves, from the very beginning, not only the potential of prayer but also the mechanics: how to pray.

I would like to share some of what I have encountered in prayer. Not the last word, but a preliminary report from an explorer: a description of the territory I've seen so far.

Why do I pray? Because I have felt spiritual despair – because grace has shown me the futility of my own unaided efforts to live an adequate life. Like others before me, I have felt that there is one, even Christ Jesus, who can speak to my condition. I pray, therefore, to lift my condition to God, to be informed and transformed in Him, to be renewed and strengthened so as

to become a more faithful instrument of His will. I pray also to obtain God's assistance, without which I am doomed to failure.

What is prayer? Prayer is that time when I withdraw, mentally or physically, from this world and fix my attention on God, exposing for His scrutiny what He already sees – every flaw and every act of faithfulness, every lack and every act of love. Naked before God, I wrestle for His blessing, struggle for discernment of His will for me, and seek for His strength to persevere in the faith. In prayer I confess, repent, am forgiven and strengthened to sin no more; I intercede for others and petition for myself; I contemplate and adore the Godhead; I give thanks for His blessings.

When do I pray? Continually; morning, noon, and night; when I awaken; when I get to the office where I work; Mondays at 8 AM; during morning meeting for worship; when I retire for the night; when difficulties arise; when I'm not sure what to do; when I have a spare moment.

Some personal observations about prayer: God is *present* whenever we pray. Not just listening long-distance, but present wherever and whenever we turn our thoughts to Him. Sometimes we can feel this Presence; sometimes we can not. He is always with us.

Our prayers are *answered,* if we pray in faith. Sometimes they are answered literally, and sometimes God gives us something really better than what we asked for. Martin Luther put it this way:

> Prayer is, therefore, a special exercise of faith, and faith makes the prayer so acceptable that either it will surely be granted, or something better than we ask will be given in its stead . . . he who does not trust, receives nothing, neither that which he asks, nor anything better.

The paradox of prayer that is answered, not as we ask but as we truly need, has been expressed by R. H. Fitzhugh in this poem:

The Paradox of Prayer

He asked for strength that he might achieve;
he was made weak that he might obey.
He asked for health that he might do greater things;
he was given infirmity that he might do better things.
He asked for riches that he might be happy;
he was given poverty that he might be wise.
He asked for power that he might have the praise of men;
he was given weakness that he might feel the need of God.
He asked for all things that he might enjoy life;
he was given life that he might enjoy all things.
He has received nothing that he asked for, all that he hoped for.
His prayer is answered.

Prayer *strengthens my faith,* and faith strengthens my prayer. The repeated experience of the Presence of God in prayer nurtures and strengthens my faith and my ability to be obedient. As faith increases I am better able to

direct my attention and intention to God.

Prayer *makes me a better person.* John Chapman wrote:

> The real value of prayer can be securely estimated by its effect on the rest of the day. It ought to produce very definite results: a) A desire for the Will of God . . . b) the cessation of multiple resolutions . . . now we make only one, to do and suffer God's Will – and we keep all our old ones, or rather, they seem to keep themselves without any trouble on our part. c) Hence we have arrived at simplicity: all our spiritual life is unified into the one desire of union with God and His Will.

Prayer is not measured by our feelings or our fervor at the time, but by our behavior afterward. Behavior is in turn measured not by good works, but by obedience.

Prayer can happen *anywhere.* To quote Martin Luther again:

> There is no Christian who does not have time to pray without ceasing. But I mean the spiritual praying, that is, no one so heavily burdened with his labor, but that if he will he can, while working, speak with God in his heart, lay before Him his need and that of other men, ask for help, make petition, and in all this exercise and strengthen his faith.

Prayer is *a gift from God.* The more I pray, the more blessings I receive: the harvest of the Spirit (Galatians): love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control.

Prayer has *different aspects* and one flows easily among them. A prayer of intercession for a friend undergoing a trial may become thanksgiving for the blessings we share together, which may become adoration/contemplation of the glory of God's creation.

God *knows* what we're trying to say. Eloquence is not necessary and maybe detrimental. God knows the deepest meaning of our most inarticulate groans and sighs before we utter them, and is certain to give us what we most need.

Prayer is *not a substitute for effort.* The objective of prayer is to conform our will to His in order that His will might be done *in and through and by* us. Prayer may be the vehicle by which God gives us the discernment to see the reality of the situation which prompts our prayer in a new way, empowering us to be the vehicles of his love to correct the problem. Prayer may give us the strength and courage to work for change and improvement which we had otherwise thought far beyond our human capabilities.

How, then, to begin? One of the greatest practitioners of prayer in recorded history was Jesus of Nazereth, so let us see what Jesus taught about prayer. There are five themes in his teachings concerning prayer: Persistence, Right Attitude toward other humans, Faith in God, Submission to God's Will, and Directness or Simplicity. It is worthwhile to look at each of these in turn.

Persistence: In the Gospel according to Luke (1:5-13), Jesus gives us the example of a man who is initially unwilling to get out of bed to help his

neighbor but who changes his mind because of the importunity, or persistence, of his friend.

Right Attitude: In Matthew (6:14), Jesus teaches that if we forgive other people their trespasses, our heavenly Father will forgive us also. For clarity, Jesus then states the same thing in the negative: if we do not forgive, our Father will not forgive us. This is shown through the example of the prayer of the Pharisee.

Faith: A woman with a twelve-year flow of blood is healed by her faith in the story recounted in Luke (8:43-48).

Submission to God's Will: Returning to Matthew (7:21-23), one reads that the one who does God's will, not the one who does mighty works in God's name, will enter the Kingdom. This is intended to teach us to pray for discernment and submission, not for mighty powers.

Directness and simplicity: Finally, in Mark (12:40), Jesus tells us the scribes who make long prayers will be condemned, then praises the widow and her mite.

With these principles in mind, one may begin, perhaps by simply asking God, "Lord, teach me to pray." How better to begin the journey into prayer than with a prayer?

Remember Jesus' response to same question: the Model Prayer. It is not clear to me that He meant those particular words to become a ritual, but the model is important. Many helpful books have been written about that prayer. It is also very helpful simply to meditate on the words of the prayer yourself. Let the Inward Teacher speak.

I have two other models of Christian prayer to share: one common to Protestant tradition, and one from the Orthodox tradition. The first model is concerned with intercessory or petitionary prayer and is exemplary of prophetic, or biblical prayer, especially in the evangelical tradition. Petitionary prayer is so named because it addresses the inescapable fact that we are utterly dependent on God. We are in the position of petitioning the Lord for the basic necessities of life.

The objective of this type of prayer is not bending God's will to our own, but conforming our will to God's. Prayer is understood to be fundamentally surrender to God, although within His will we are free (and empowered) to exert our own. The steps to petitionary prayer are as follows:

Create a setting conducive to prayer. Become physically comfortable and protected against interruptions. Give yourself time to pray unhurriedly.

Decide what you want to pray about. Sometimes you will wish to pray for personal blessings, sometimes to intercede for others. I pray for rain for my apple trees (like Elijah), for spiritual discernment, for strength to do my work, and for the safety of family and friends.

Decide whether that is a Christian thing to want. Within the limits of Christ (which is to say within the limits of the moral universe), we can pray for anything and Jesus' promise that our prayers will be answered will hold true. A very important step for me: I have faith that my prayers will be answered, and I have experienced that my prayers have been answered in the past. That faith and experience make me very cautious about what I pray for,

because God may grant my prayer!

Still the mind and center your attention on the subject of your prayer.

Talk with God about it. Not just to God, but with God. Have a dialogue.

Promise God what you will do to make this prayer come true. How can you be an instrument of God's will, if God wills that your prayer should be answered as you ask? Promise yourself and God that you will do these things.

Thank God for answering in His/Her own way and time. That may be as you asked and answered now, as you ask but answered later (patience), or to grant something better.

Release the prayer from your conscious mind. If you pray in faith, you should now be able to act as if the prayer were already answered, without further anxiety.

Begin again, or emerge from prayer-consciousness into your daily life.

Reviewing this model with Jesus' five themes in mind, one sees that faith and submission are addressed in the step of thanking God for answering our prayer in His own way and time. The other themes are present or absent depending primarily on the way we carry out the other steps.

In petitionary prayer, I have been helped greatly by the use of a prayer list. My list is a stack of 3x5 cards; I select 1/7 of the stack each morning and in prayer examine each name, going through the steps just outlined. The physical process helps focus my attention on that person's (or group's) needs. I avoid spending precious time racking my memory for that person who I remember yesterday resolving to pray for this morning.

The final model of prayer comes from the Orthodox Christian tradition, where it has become central to prayer life: the Jesus Prayer, characteristic of the mystical tradition. This prayer has had a minor surge in popularity in the West recently for the wrong reasons: it can produce the same physiological effects as Transcendental Meditation.

The Jesus Prayer consists of only seven words in Greek and Russian, ten in English: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me."Repeated consciously until it acquires a life of its own, like the mantras now coming to the West from Eastern tradition, it has been the touchstone and protector of many Christians against temptation and sin.

These few words embody all five themes. Repeated over and over, they encourage *persistence.* By reminding the pray-er of his/her own need for mercy, they encourage a *forgiving attitude* toward those who need our mercy.

For Christians, the recognition of Jesus' true identity demonstrates our *faith.* The request for mercy indicates one's desire to be *submissive* to God's will. A more *direct and simple* prayer, containing all five themes, can hardly be imagined.

I set aside fifteen minutes each day to repeat this prayer without interruption, and also use this prayer when I have an idle moment or two. I can now report from personal experience some remarkable effects of this prayer discipline. It is truly hard to sin while repeating the Jesus prayer! When at least some of my attention is focussed on God, other things appear in a different light. Temptations are weakened; good impulses strengthened;

values shift. It is an entrance-point into wordless contemplation – awe and adoration of the living God in all His/Her aspects, and thanksgiving for the blessings, all undeserved, that I and the rest of the human family have received.

These three models are not the only ones that can be used, but they are helpful. The Model Prayer, the intercessory prayer, and the Jesus Prayer can be modified by each person as the individual way, the individual journey, unfolds.

There is a final step. Once one has a model (or models) for prayer, how can one integrate prayer into one's daily life? There is space only to highlight some principles.

The first principle is *commitment.* The life of prayer, like all of religious life, is characterized by consolation and desolation. By commitment made and adhered to, we avoid the dangers of falling away from our prayer during desolation or during consolation, when our need may seem less compelling.

The second principle is a *"Rule."* Rules are reminiscent of monastic orders, either Eastern or Western, and in fact both of these faith traditions have discovered experientially the value of discipline in the spiritual journey. For those of us born into the Western culture, I highly recommend William Law's *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life,* reprinted recently in paperback by the Paulist Press.

The third principle is the importance of a *group.* For all but a very few of us, in whatever faith tradition, the spiritual journey is undertaken as part of a faith community. Do not be too proud to accept the mutual help of other travelers along the way.

By following these principles, by following a model for prayer, and most importantly by the grace of God who seeks for us to follow Him more than we seek Him ourselves, we can attain a life of unbroken prayer – constant awareness of the presence of God, continual supplication for his mercy and support, and continual resolution to become more true to His will. We can arrive at that state of the interior life which is characterized by a continual lifting of all that we have and are to Him, feeling his support and assistance every moment.

To conclude with another quotation from Isaac Penington:

> Some may desire to know what I have at last met with. I answer, I have met with the seed. Understand that word, and thou wilt be satisfied, and enquire no further. . . . I have met with the true spirit of prayer and supplication, wherein the Lord is prevailed with, and which draws from him whatever the condition needs; the soul always looking up to him in the will, and in the time and way, which is acceptable with him. What shall I say? I have met with the true peace, the true righteousness, the true holiness, the true rest of the soul, the everlasting habitation which the redeemed dwell in; and I know all these to be true, in him that is true, and am capable of no doubt, dispute, or reasoning in my mind about them; it abiding there, where it hath received the full assurance and satisfaction.

Women and Buddhism

My dear friends, we are already one but we imagine we are not. We set up barriers. What we have to recover is our original unity, and we do this by being absolutely who we are. No pretense. No fake. Just who we are.

Maurine Feelgood, Roshi

If women are to be successful in acquiring recognition of their equal rights they must pursue this end with the certain knowledge that this recognition is already given by the Lord and that they are only working toward a more perfect outward manifestation of this fact. By so doing they will meet men as equals from the beginning and leave men to sort out their side of it. It is important that they do not purposely frighten men and further polarize the sexes, remembering always that real equality manifests as trusting and loving relationships, free of dominance and subservience.

Roshi Isan Sacco

Do not seek for lives after this one; just do the very best you can at all times, going on completely beyond both heaven and hell. What suffices to turn hell into paradise? So what? I said that to myself once long ago when I had made a one hundred per cent success of myself as a musician, So what? Where now?

Kennett Roshi

I don't call this work "Zen" anymore, because the word is unnecessary to the inquiry. This fundamental inquiry into the human mind (not my mind and body personally, but the human mind) doesn't need any descriptive label. To the extent that this mind (as it functions in images, in blockages, in contradiction and conflict) is clearly understood, the whole human mind is clearly understood, because it does not differ fundamentally from one person to another. On the surface, superficially, we're all different, but fundamentally, each of us has an image of being a self, of being someone.

To see that this is an idea, a thought creation, seems inordinately difficult. The self image seems so solid, so real, that one takes the self for a fact. One confuses it with this body and with the ongoing processes of thought, sensation, and emotion. But there is no owner of all this.

To say "this is me" and have an image "I'm good at this, I'm poor at that" – is a mental construction, a bunch of thoughts and ideas just like any other thought and idea, part of that stream of thinking poured out by the brain. Yet "this is me" is the root of all our individual, interpersonal and international problems.

Toni Packer

For more about women and Buddhism, we recommend the following sources:

Kennett Roshi. *The Wild, White Goose: The Diary of a Zen Trainee.* Available through the Shasta Abbey, P.O. Box 478, Mount Shasta, CA 96067. A disarmingly honest account by a woman who studied at a Japanese Zen monastery immediately after World War II. The Shasta Abbey, which Kennett Roshi founded, publishes a journal which has devoted a special issue to women and Buddhism.

Kahawai – Journal of Women and Zen. Diamond Sangha, 2119 Kaloa Way, Honolulu, HI 96822.

Primary Point, The Kwan Um Zen School, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864. The winter issue contains transcripts of this fall's conference on "Buddhism and the Feminine."

CENTERS OF INTEREST

by Anthony Manousos, Editorial Associate

As I suggested in a recent editorial, you do not have to be a monk or a nun to find spiritual support and renewal in a monastery or retreat center Many of our readers have written to tell us that they too have found monasteries to be "oases of peace in this frantic, agitated society." I look forward to hearing more about "centers of interest," so please continue to write. Sometime soon I hope to travel across the country, visiting centers and sharing my experiences with readers. In the meanwhile, Fellowship in Prayer *will continue to publish brief reports about places that offer help to those of us trying to live in the world without being caught up in its games.*

Chapel House. Colgate University. Hamilton, N.Y. 13346. (315) 824-1000 Ext. 675. Built on a wooded hillside above Colgate, Chapel House has a library of several thousand volumes, a fine collection of religious music, and many works of religious art by Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Confucian, and Christian artists. Guests are free to use facilities for religious study, meditation, or worship. No discipline is imposed; no teacher gives instruction. Chapel House is not affiliated with any religious organization. Reservations should be made several days in advance. Chapel House charges $10 a day to help cover the cost of room and board. People of all backgrounds and religious traditions are welcome.

Shasta Abbey. Summit Drive, P.O. Box 478, 96067 (916) 926-4208. Contact: guestmaster. Situated near beautiful and mysterious Mt. Shasta, the Abbey is a seminary and training monastery for the Zen Buddhist priesthood under the direction of Jiyu-Kennett Roshi. The Abbey offers a comprehensive lay program, including daily meditation instruction, weekend retreats, and a three-month lay training program. Shorter stays may be arranged. The emphasis is on personal experience and its direct application to one's daily life.

Genesis: Spiritual Life Center 53 Mill Street, Westfield, MA 01085. (413) 562-3627/8. Located in a wooded Berkshire setting, Genesis is a Catholic center that offers hospitality to men and women of all faiths. "We are committed to designing and hosting programs which foster holistic integration of mind, body, and spirit. We believe that each person is a seed of God, meant to grow into the likeness of God, and we strive to make Genesis a place where that seed can be nourished and nurtured towards full maturity." Various retreat formats are offered, including private, centering, guided, directed, *Intensive journal*, etc. Also offered are mini-courses on holistic health, Jungian psychology, family concerns, prayer, and spirituality. Cost: $20 a day for room and board. Reservations should be made in advance. Contact: Sr. Ruth Goldrick or Sr. Elizabeth Oleksak.

All Creation is Sanctified

GREEK ORTHODOXY:

A talk by Dr. Demetrios Constantelos

Maybe in the next decades the various kinds of 'Eastern' Christianity – with their distrust of centralized church government, their synthesis of Oriental and Western ingredients, their emphasis on God's presence rather

than on His command, their less exacting view of doctrinal specificity, together with the incomparable splendor of their worship service – will provide hospitality for far more than one homeless modern soul.

– Harvey Cox

Why is it that the oldest and most conservative Christian church seems so appealing to many modern Westerners? Dr. Demetrios Constantelos, a Greek Orthodox priest and scholar who spoke at Princeton recently under the auspices of Fellowship in Prayer, suggested the following explanation: "Westerners have come to realize that the Greek Orthodox faith is not a museum piece, not simply a matter of icons, candles, and rituals, but a living tradition that emphasizes personal spirituality and social involvement." In Dr. Constantelos' view, what Greek Orthodoxy offers is balance: a balance between the mind and heart, between contemplation and social action, between historical consciousness and the felt presence of God in everyday life.

A prodigiously prolific scholar as well as a committed Eastern Orthodox Christian, Dr. Constantelos is uniquely qualified to speak about his faith. His scholarly work has documented the importance of social involvement and charitable activities in the life of the Eastern Church. This aspect of Orthodoxy was largely ignored by Western scholars who had observed the Eastern Church under oppressive regimes, such as the Ottoman Empire and Soviet Communism, which prohibit Christians from social involvement. Constantelos has shown that the heart of Eastern Orthodoxy is its philanthropy – a word with much more powerful connotations in Greek than in English. Philanthropia means "love of human beings" – an active love characterized by good works, but motivated by a sense of the divine.

Born and raised in Spelia, a tiny village on the southwest part of the Peloponnesus, Constantelos was one of ten children in a poor family. Like many young men growing up in Greece during the forties, Constantelos was attracted to the Communists, with their promise of economic and social justice. "I almost became a militant Marxist," Constantelos confessed. "My dream was not to become a priest or a theologian, but a lawyer or judge who would struggle on behalf of the common people." But the example of sincere and humble itinerant priest of the Zoe movement drew him and many of his friends back into the church. "I decided, 'Why become a judge and help only a few people, when I could become a priest and save the world?' " With a smile, Constantelos added: "When I become a priest and didn't save the world, I decided to become an historian and try to understand the world."

Besides being an historian, teacher, and father of four daughters, Dr. Constantelos has started three churches in New Jersey. He also works with many philanthropic causes. He has degrees in theology and history from Holy Cross Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Rutgers University.

Those who gathered to hear Dr. Constantelos' talk included a bookkeeper,

a lawyer, a nun, a cook, a salesman, an office worker, and several teachers. They came from diverse religious backgrounds, including Lutheranism, Catholicism, and Quakerism. All were eager to learn more about the roots of the Christian faith and its meaning for their spiritual lives.

– A.M.

Religion as Quest: Continuity Between Classical and Christianized Greece

Those of you who have visited modern Greece have undoubtedly noticed *proskynetaria,* or little stands for icons, along the highways. These little chapels are everywhere. Those of you who have studied the history of ancient Greece know that the divine was also felt to be present everywhere, whether through statues, sacred groves, or whatever. What I am trying to point out is that for the ancient Greek as well as the modern Eastern Orthodox Christian the whole creation is sanctified.

If you want to understand why there are so many little chapels along the highways in Greece today and why there were so many shrines in ancient Greece, you must understand the meaning of *threskeia* and how it differs from the Latin term *religio, religare* (from which our term religion derives), which has legalistic connotations. *Threskeia* in Greek means two things: the instinctive worship of the divine. The second meaning, which has not found many supporters among linguists, though it makes sense and is accepted by many people, is "a leaping up in joyful expectation." This means that religion, in the second category, is a perpetual quest, a search. In the last analysis, spirituality and religion have been part and parcel of the Greek experience from antiquity to the present day.

The Past and Present Orthodox Church

The term "Greek Orthodox" was originally used to include all Orthodox believers, but with the revival of nationalism in the nineteenth century, Orthodox churches designated themselves Russian, Ukranian, etc. There are around one hundred and fifty million Orthodox believers in the world today. Figures differ widely because no one knows how many Eastern Orthodox believers exist in the Soviet Union. When I was in the Soviet Union, I was told that in the open there are at least fifty million Orthodox Christians, but there are also many crypto-Christians who are in hiding because they do not want to lose their jobs. I was informed that there are at least ninety million believers in Russia. While numbers of course do not count, they do give you some idea of the extent of Eastern Orthodoxy.

Eastern Orthodoxy is actually a confederation of churches, just as the United States of America is a confederation of states. Only Eastern Orthodoxy is united not administratively, but through the same faith, the same creed and doctrine, the same standard of ethics, and most importantly perhaps, common worship, common prayer, common spirituality. These are the elements that unite them and make them one church. The emphasis is on unity in diversity.

If you go to Greece and then to the Soviet Union, you will find this diversity. The service in the Soviet Union will last three and a half hours. The Russians leave nothing out. The Greeks have rationalized the service, which usually lasts about an hour. If the rubric says to recite *kyrie eleison* forty times, the Greeks modernize things by saying *kyrie eleison* three times. I raised this question with the Metropolitan of Leningrad, the late Nicodeme. After participating in one of the services that lasted three hours and forty-five minutes, I could not move my knee. I told him that I was accustomed to long services, but not this long. I asked him why he didn't leave a few things out. He said if we try to eliminate things, the common people, our faithful, would come back and say, "Add more." And why? Because this is the only way to have people in close contact with the church. The Greek-speaking church went through a similar experience during the Ottoman Empire when there was no preaching allowed and so many limitations were placed upon the church that the only way to be in contact with people was to have long services. So every day of the week services were held. . . .

The second important thing I want to emphasize is that the Greek Orthodox have a strong historical consciousness. If you ask the Greek Orthodox what they think about their church, they will say, "Our church is the original church." Why do they say that? Why do they have such a strong historical consciousness? First of all, they will tell you that although Jesus was born at a time of Roman rule, it was also a time when the Greek mind ruled over Rome. This helps us to understand the conflicts in the Middle Ages, and especially the schism of the eleventh century. Rome speaks from the position of power, but at the same time the Greek East was conscious of what Horace said: "Captive Greece took its captor captive." Throughout the Middle Ages there was a conflict between Roman political rule and Greek cultural or intellectual rule. When you read the accounts of the conflicts of the eleventh century, the Greeks called the Westerners barbarians, and the Westerners called the Greeks effeminate. If you want to understand the conflict between East and West, you must go back not to the time of Christ, but much earlier, to the first and second century B.C., when similar conflicts took place.

These are of course my personal understandings and interpretations of the Greek Orthodox experience. But oftentimes as I reflect, as I try to understand my own people, I ask myself, why so much emphasis on history? If you were to ask me if our church is the true church, I would say yes without any hesitation, not because of chauvinism or of a personal commitment – right or wrong – but because indeed I do have this historical consciousness.

Going back to the early sources, we find that Christianity did indeed begin in Judaism, but in a Hellenized Judaism. Today biblical scholars of all backgrounds have emphasized one thing: in the time of Jesus not only were the upper classes of the Jews Hellenized, as we thought thirty years ago, but the common people and ordinary workers as well. If you want to understand why Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Paul wrote the New Testament in Greek, it was because that was the language not only of the intellectuals but of the

common people. In fact, a recent scholar argued that Jesus must have taught in Greek as well. . . .

There is great unity in the history of the Greek people. Greek is one of the very few languages that has an unbroken oral continuity of nearly four thousand years. Greek is perhaps the only language with an unbroken written continuity from the time of Homer. Although the ordinary person does not understand Homer, he will find many words in the Homeric language which are used in modern Greek and also in the liturgical language of the Byzantine era. This means that, either because of the language, or because of cultivation, education, or whatever, there is an historical continuity and consciousness among the Greeks.

Whether or not you consider the New Testament the Word of God is irrelevant; you cannot deny that it was written entirely in Greek. Therefore, the Greeks have the persistent belief that the present-day church is in unbroken continuity with the past. One of the reasons that they maintain Greek in their liturgy is that they don't want to give up this language which was used in the time of Jesus.

The Prayer Life of the Orthodox

Of course here at the Fellowship you are concerned with spirituality and prayer. Until a few years ago one of the great complaints of the Greek Orthodox people was that the Western brethren did not understand Orthodoxy at all. If you happen to read many nineteenth-century theologians, you will find this cliche: the Greek Orthodox are dead, they have only icons, candles, rituals, and nothing else. They knew something about spirituality, but it was only on Mount Athos, divorced from the world and from society. Our knowledge has improved a great deal, and we have mutual respect. The Greeks no longer call the Westerners barbarians, and the Westerners no longer think of Orthodoxy as simply exotica for the museum.

Certainly the center of Orthodox is prayer life. The Church has services for every time of day and for every day of the year, from the moment of birth to the day of passage to eternity . . . . Prayer life is something of essence. What kind of prayer life? As in every tradition – and no one has a monopoly on these practices – we have indeed oral prayer, verbal prayer, and mystical prayer. The church has not said this is the best way, this is anachronistic, or this is the way of the monks. A layman is encouraged to pursue the experience of the monk on Mount Athos, but at the same time he is encouraged to be involved. As far as the Orthodox Church is concerned, there is no antithesis or conflict between a life of the spirit – spirituality, if you will – and the life of good works, or involvement with society. Now perhaps one of the best illustrations of this is in *The Art of Prayer,* an anthology of passages from Gregory Palamas, a fourteenth-century mystic, to present-day Russian mystics. Let me just read a few sentences attributed to Theophane the Recluse:

"In all our efforts and struggles what we seek is purification of the heart and restoration of the spirit. There are two ways to this: the active way, the

practice of ascetic labors. . ."

This means going out in the fields, tending the sheep, cultivating the gardens, producing vegetables, or going into the community, serving the poor, working in hospitals, and so forth. We have plenty of evidence of this type of activity. One of my scholarly concerns is with the church and society. I was prompted to pursue this line of study because of my experiences in the States. Many of our brethren here thought indeed that this is a musuem church, not a church for the modern world. So I decided to find out what did my Church do in history. What this mystic says is fully attested by my scholarly work, which shows that the Church was very active in establishing hospitals, schools and other services for the poor and needy.

The second way cited by Theophane is the contemplative way, the turning to God. What this means in essence is that there is no conflict between the active and spiritual life. You can work in the field and be fully aware of the presence of the deity in you and around you. You can be attending the poor people in a slum and at the same time know that you are filled with the spirit. In fact, I think this passage is very characteristic of Orthodoxy, because Orthodoxy does not discount natural revelation, or the presence of God before the coming of Christ. You remember that St. Paul in his beautiful speech to the Athenians cited Aratus, the Greek poet, who says that "in God we live and move and have our existence." This is part and parcel of the spiritual mentality of the East.

Theophanus then cites St. Gregory of Sinai. For us, the chain is unbroken. For us, the [Church] Fathers are very much alive. They do not live in the seventh century. They live in the present day. Our conception of time is different perhaps from what you find in other traditions. The past is very much present. That's why we honor the Fathers. The experience of the early Christian and the medieval church is also our experience. There is a unity and continuity. . . .

St. Gregory is cited here as saying that "God is gained either by activity, or involvement, or by the act of invoking the name of Jesus."

Pray Unceasingly: The Prayer of Jesus

Some of you have heard of this prayer of Jesus, since in the Middle Ages and even in the present day many people have emphasized this aspect of Greek Orthodox spirituality. What is this prayer of Jesus? How do we understand this? It's simple. It's in full conformity with what Paul said: 'Pray unceasingly' (I Thessalonians V, 17). How do you pray unceasingly? Certainly he does not refer to oral prayer, but to mental prayer. I can pray mentally wherever I am by invoking the name of Jesus, which constitutes just a few words: "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner." Reciting this prayer also entails an understanding of theology and implies humility, a sense of the unworthiness of the individual and a need for the everpresence of the Creator in the human.

"The practice of prayer is called an art, and it is a very simple one. Standing with captiousness and attention in the heart, cry out unceasingly, 'Lord

Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.' Without having in your mind any visual concept or image, believe that the Lord sees you and listens to you."

This type of spirituality received a great deal of attention, especially in the fourteenth century, by Gregory Palamas and Theophanus of Philadelphia, who emphasized that you need a technique: stop reading for a moment and let your mind get out of the body, do not think in terms of material existence at all. This is the essence of personal prayer, personal spirituality. But what is the purpose of all this? The purpose is indeed the identification of the human with the deity, to achieve *theosis*. This is central to Eastern Orthodox theology. What is *theosis*? Certainly it is paradise, it is salvation, but it is not a place: hell is not a place, it is a condition. Therefore, *theosis* is the condition in which the individual soul achieves a constant awareness of its ever-presence in God. *Theosis* is not absorption in God, it's not pantheism. Each soul is like a drop of water in the water without losing its identity. Or it is like a cell in the organism which is composed of three billion cells. This analogy helps us to understand the relationship between the divine and the individual.

Plato identified philosophy with this type of achievement. The purpose of philosophy is "to become God to the extent that it is possible" through training – intellectual and spiritual training, not simply logic. You will also find this in the Bible. In one of the Psalms it says we are "little Gods" (Ps. 82.6; see also John 10, 34). The Orthodox have built upon this – there is no disagreement – when we speak of salvation, we mean the condition in which the human being lives a life in God, not absorbed in God, but receiving the energies, the light of God – the joy of being constantly in the presence of God.

Liturgy and Philanthropy

The other very important aspect of prayer life is the liturgy. The liturgy attributed to St John Chrysostom is perhaps the high point of the spiritual life of the Orthodox. Liturgy has two parts: the liturgy of the Word and the mystery. One is noological and feeds the mind. The other feeds the soul, the feelings. Only the didactic part of the liturgy – the liturgy of the word – would make sense to most Protestants. But the second part, the liturgy of the mystery, is also extremely important to the Greeks. . .

There is a need for a balance between the mind and heart, between spirituality and activism. Faith without good works is not real, and good works without faith becomes legalistic. The two must be spontaneous, an expression of the inner being. . .

It is not irrelevant to go back to the concept of *philanthropia,* the social involvement of the church. The word in Greek means "love of the human being." It is more than fulfilling a social obligation; it is a spontaneous expression of love for a human being who is part and parcel of you. It is interesting to recall that the Buddhists do not have a saying such a "love your neighbor as yourself"; they assume that if you love yourself, you will love other human beings.

PRAYING HANDS AND FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

by Reuben Musey

Since its founding in 1949 by Carl Allison Evans, a retired businessman and former Presbyterian missionary to the Philippines, *Fellowship in Prayer* has been dedicated to the idea that men and women of all religions share a common faith in the power of prayer. Believing that people who pray together are better able to understand each other and promote the cause of peace, Evans placed an advertisement in *The New York Times* calling for the establishment of an interfaith "Fellowship in Prayer." The response was immediate and overwhelmingly positive. Roman Catholics, Jews, Protestants, Buddhists, and others from every faith on the globe offered their support. As a result, *Fellowship in Prayer* was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization, with a board of trustees comprising distinguished representatives of various faiths. Under the direction of Carl Evans, Kathryn Brown, and Paul Griffith, the Fellowship has sent out a bi-monthly publication to its members. For many years its cover illustration was "Praying Hands" by Albrecht Durer.

Durer's masterpiece, created in 1508, will be on display at the Morgan Library in New York City until May 26, 1985. This is practically the first time in nearly two hundred years that this remarkable work has left the Albertina Museum in Vienna. (During World War I it was stored in a bank-vault in Austria, and during World War II it was hidden in the salt mines of Hallein near the Austro-German border; on both occasions, it was safely returned to the museum).

"Praying Hands" is the centerpiece of seventy-five drawings now on loan – many for the first time – from the Albertina collection. Besides a dozen Durers, there are works by thirty other artists – including Michaelangelo, Rembrandt, Raphael, and Wateau. For long-time members of *Fellowship in Prayer,* this will be a rare opportunity to see a work that is not only a moving example of devotional art, but also a memorable part of our organization's history.

June 1985 will be the thirty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Fellowship in Prayer. Our readers are encouraged to contribute their recollections and reflections to be included in a short history of Fellowship in Prayer.

We regret to inform our readers that our friend, Fuard Uduman, whose stories from the Sufi tradition appeared in our December 1984 issue, has passed away at his home in Sri Lanka.

Resources

FOR INDIVIDUALS AND PRAYER GROUPS

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Sixty-six times have these eyes beheld
the changing scene of autumn.
I have said enough about moonlight,
Ask no more.
Only listen to the voice of pines
and cedars when no wind stirs.

Ryonen

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